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*March, 7, 1844*

**The Practical  
SHOW CARD  
✿ WRITER ✿**

June 21, 1905  
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## THE PRACTICAL SHOW CARD WRITER.

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Show cards and price tickets for advertising purposes have become a great necessity for all branches of industry, they are not only used in every store and restaurant, etc., but also brought in large quantities by Manufacturers and distributed by them among their retail customers to attract the attention of buyers for specialties of their manufactures. A neat Show card and Price ticket written in black on light cardboard or in white plain letters on colored cardboard, especially in black, is always attractive and very important for Window of Store decoration.

The Material generally used for Show cards and Price tickets is black, gray or white cardboard which varies in thickness and quality according to size and kind of Show card. For all small cards and tickets a 4 to 6-ply cardboard is used, for larger signs a 8 and sometimes 10-ply cardboard is necessary.

**BRUSHES.** It is absolutely necessary that good brushes be used. Red sable is the best brush for rapid work and will keep in shape longer than any other. After using, don't fail to clean them thoroughly, it keeps the brushes in good condition and saves time, as it is much easier to clean up directly after using than when the brush has had time to dry. If the brushes have been used for water colors they should be cleaned in water only, if oil paint has been used, clean the brushes in turpentine. A great many sign painters keep the lettering brushes used for oil paint in lard or vaseline when not in use, this keeps the hair soft and pliable. It is advisable to keep one set of brushes for water colors and one set for oil colors.

**PEN-POINTS.** For some lettering a stub pen or a round writing pen will be found serviceable, for fine work use a soft pointed pen, all lines and borders are drawn with a plain penpoint or ruling pen.

### COLORS. BLACK PAINT FOR WRITING ON LIGHT CARDBOARD.

There are many different kinds of prepared marking ink on the market, most of which can be used successfully. But as some prefer to mix their own I can recommend a receipt, which I have used a great many years. It produces a black enamel-like letter and if carefully mixed will be always ready for use: Mix three parts of Ivory drop black and one part best asphaltum and thin with turpentine. The best results are obtained by preparing about a half pint and allowing it to stand two or three days. When not in use it should be well covered, as dust will spoil the glossy finish it should have when dry. If it dries a brownish shade, too much asphaltum has been used. If there is no gloss a little more asphaltum should be added.

**WHITE PAINT.** A superior white paint for use on dark cardboard is made of white zinc, mucilage and water. This is to be mixed only as used, as after it has once dried it cannot be used again. Mix equal parts of Refined White Zinc and water and add a few drops of mucilage, stir well before using. If the paint cracks after having dried, too much mucilage has been used. It may require several experiments before the exact proportions can be determined, as atmospheric conditions will have considerable influence on the consistency of the mixture.

**COLORS. COLORED PAINTS.** Colored waterpaints are mixed in the same way as the white paint described above. Colored oil paints can be bought much cheaper ready mixed in small cans, but generally need the addition of some turpentine before they can be used for lettering. It will not be necessary to buy all the colors used, as by mixing two or more of the ordinary colors you can get all the shades and tones. In the table of colors stated below the principal ingredient is named first and the others in the order of their importance. For instance Orange is nearly all yellow, with just a dash of red. The exact pro-



pc must be determined by experience. Many different Shades may  
be ed by changing the proportions of the ingredients or by re-  
ve their order. Addition of white will give the color a lighter  
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#### TABLE FOR MIXING COLORED PAINT.

Buff -- White, Yellow, Ochre and Red  
Chocolate -- Raw Umber, Red and Black  
Claret -- Red, Umber and Black  
Blue -- Ultramarine  
Dove -- White, Vermillion, Blue and Yellow  
Drab -- White, Yellow, Ochre, Red and Black  
Fawn -- White, Yellow and Red  
Flesh -- White, Yellow Ochre and Vermillion  
French Gray -- White, "Prussian" Blue and Lake  
Gray -- White and Black  
Gold -- White, Stone-Ochre and Red  
Green -- Blue and Yellow  
Green Bronze -- Chrome Green, Black and Yellow  
Green Pea -- White and Chrome Green  
Lavender -- Blue, White and Red  
Lemon -- White and Chrome Yellow  
Olive -- Yellow, Blue, Black and White  
Orange -- Yellow and Red  
Peach -- White and Vermillion  
Pearl -- White, Black and Blue  
Pink -- White, Vermillion and Lake  
Purple -- Blue and Red  
Red -- Vermillion  
Rose -- White and Madder Lake  
Violet -- Red, Blue and White  
Yellow -- Chrome Yellow

TO MIX GOLD, SILVER OR COPPER-BRONZE AS WATER COLOR.

Take a little of Gold or Silver or Copper Bronze-powder add a few drops of mucilage, stir well until it becomes a thick pulp and add a little water; don't use too much mucilage as the bronze will lose its bright color.

#### FIRST PRACTICE WITH BRUSH AND PEN.

On sample chart No. 1 a single stroke alphabet is shown. All written characters are made in sections. Each stroke is numbered to indicate the order in which it is to be made.

Copy this chart several times on cardboard or plain paper. Put the cardboard flat on the table, hold the brush between the thumb and first and second fingers very nearly perpendicular. To give your right hand a more steady position, place your left hand in front of you and allow the palm of your right hand to rest on top of your left hand. Start all vertical strokes at the top and go down.- Always make horizontal strokes from left to right. Follow the order which is indicated by the numbers, the darts show the right direction. From the block letters as shown on chart No. 2 in the same general way, making the section in the parallel lines, instead of one stroke, when the outline of the letter is complete fill in the space between the lines as shown on chart No. 1. Letters E and F. Charts No. 3 and 4 show specimen of the different styles of Roman letters. Both these style are being used extensively for card work. The letters are formed the same as block letters on chart No. 2 employing the system used in forming the single stroke letters on chart No. 1.

TO WRITE SYSTEMATICALLY. In the book containing "Student's Alphabets" you will find on page 1 Egyptian letters, on page 2 Block letters, on page 3 Roman letters. Take a plain sheet of paper, rule off the squares in the same manner as shown in the book and write the letters in exactly the same way, this will be a good practice which you will have to do several times.





One of the principal requirements in card sign writing is the proper spacing of the letters, words and sentences. All letters must be spaced at equal distances apart. The spaces between words should be about double the space used between the letters. A margin clear of lettering should be left all around the sign, anywhere from one-eighth to one-quarter of the entire length of the card. This clear space around the reading matter tends to make the lettering stand out clearer and makes the sign more readable. A card with medium size letters and wide margin is more legible than one of the same size with large heavy lettering which covers the entire card, besides it is of much better taste. After you have practiced the instructions given above and you are ready to start sign-writing draw a sketch of the wording which you intent to write, with a soft pencil on a thin piece of paper. The size of the letters of course must be in proportion to the size of the card you are going to write on, as well as the distance between two lines must be in proportion to the size of the letters. As a rule the small letters are  $\frac{2}{3}$  in height of the capital letters. The margin between the lines should not be less than the height of the small letters, a wide margin is always preferable. Instead of squares draw 3 horizontal lines for each line of writing on your sketch. The distance between the top and the second line must be one-half of the distance between the second and the lowest line. Write the capital letters between the top and lowest line and the small letters between the second and the lowest line. As said before all this writing on the sketch must be done with a soft pencil. When your sketch is completed properly place it on the cardboard in the proper position and keep it in place with drawing pins. Then outline your wording again with a very hard and well pointed pencil. This will leave a readable impression on the cardboard. All you have got to do now is to take off the sketch, redraw the impression made on the cardboard with a penpoint and the color you are going to use, then fill in with a brush. After you have done this work for a certain length of time, you will be able to write free handed on the cardboard without a sketch. It is advisable though to use the horizontal lines (very light) as explained before they can be easily erased after the show-card is finished.

The writing of smaller letters and the outlining of larger ones with a brush is rather difficult in the beginning and requires some practice, therefore a penpoint should be used at first. For very fine work the brush must always be pointed. To obtain the point dip the brush into the paint, squeeze off the superfluous paint on the edge of the paint jar and role the brush to a point on a piece of glass. To refill the point of the brush with paint use the paint left on the piece of glass.

TO MAKE LETTERING ON CARDBOARD LOOK LIKE EMBOSSED draw the outlines of the letters first and fill in a thick paint with a very full brush. Small borders around the signs which cover the edges entirely as shown on samples can be done very neatly with a small ordinary brush cut down to a stump. Take the sign in your left hand, the brush in the right hand, then apply the stump brush on the edge of the sign and draw around. This is an easy way of drawing an absolutely straight line.

THE SHADING OF LETTERS is shown in "Student's Alphabet" on page called "Letters variously shaded". There is no need for any explanation.

ORNAMENTS make the signs very attractive. As the variety of ornaments is very large and depends very much upon the taste of the single individual I am not able to furnish here any instructions in this line. After having acquired efficiency in sign writing it is advisable to study designs especially published for this purpose.

THE CUTTING OF THE SIGN should be done before you start in to paint. The best thing to use is a heavy pair of sharp scissors. Do not use a penknife, as this is dangerous, a false movement may turn the knife and you injure your hand, at the same time you easily tear the surface of the cardboard. Very fine corners should be stamped out with a book binder's knife.

Richard O. Bersick.







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